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# ***Skill Procedures: Helmet Removal***

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## ***I. Usage***

1. When a patient wearing a helmet has been involved in a traumatic event, the helmet must be removed so that the airway can be evaluated and maintained. Additionally, helmets usually interfere with proper alignment of the spinal column when placing the patient on a backboard.

## ***II. Contraindications***

1. Patients wearing both helmets and shoulder pads can usually have their spines maintained in a neutral position by leaving the helmet in place.



**Note Well:** *If there is any airway maintenance problems caused by the helmet, the helmet must be removed.*

## ***III. Procedural Protocols***

1. Rescuer One is placed above the victim, with one hand on each side of the helmet.
  - A. This rescuer maintains alignment of the patients head and neck by holding the helmet.
2. Rescuer Two is positioned to the side of the patient.
3. Rescuer Two removes the chin strap (if present).
  - A. Chin straps usually do not have to be cut.
4. Rescuer Two places one hand under the neck and occiput, while placing the other hand on the anterior neck.
  - A. The thumb should press on one angle of the mandible, while the index and middle fingers press on the other angle.

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### ***III. Procedural Protocols (continued)***

5. Rescuer Two now assumes maintenance of cervical spine alignment.
6. Rescuer One should pull laterally on the sides of the helmet, and begin to remove the helmet.
  - A. Full face helmets should be tilted back to help clear the nose



**Note Well:** Tilt the helmet, **not** the head.

7. After removing the helmet, Rescuer One will maintain alignment of the cervical spine, using standard technique.
8. Refer to the appropriate Spinal Immobilization Protocol for further direction.



### ***IV. Notes***

1. The helmet must be maneuvered over the nose and ears while the head and neck are held stable.
2. If the patient is wearing glasses, they must be removed prior to removing the helmet.
3. Spinal alignment can usually be maintained with the helmet on if the patient is wearing both helmets and shoulder pads.